

DNREC Solicits Requests for Proposals for Phase 4 of Settlement Mitigation Awards

\$3.4 Million in Funding Available to Improve State's Air Quality

The Delaware [Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control](#) today issued a request for proposals (RFP) for investments of \$3.4 million from the Environmental Mitigation Trust on projects that improve the state's air by reducing emissions of nitrogen oxides (NO_x). A virtual public meeting will be held on Wednesday, Feb. 15 to help organizations apply for the grants by close of business on Monday, March 21.

"The Environmental Mitigation Trust is another opportunity from DNREC to help businesses, non-profit organizations, state agencies and individual citizens in our state to improve air quality," said DNREC Secretary Shawn M. Garvin. "I encourage Delaware organizations to submit proposals for projects that will produce tangible results in reducing air pollution and help us move closer to our goal of clean air for Delaware."

Eligible mitigation actions include projects to reduce NO_x from heavy-duty diesel sources. Eligible projects include the replacement or repowering of medium- and heavy-duty trucks, and school and transit buses. Other eligible mitigation actions include engine repower for freight switcher locomotives, ferries, tugs, forklifts and port cargo handling equipment. Or, they may also include, in a more limited capacity, charging infrastructure for light-duty zero emission passenger vehicles. Details are outlined in the RFP, published at bids.delaware.gov.

The funding comes from federal redress against Volkswagen Corporation and its subsidiaries for installing emissions

“defeat devices” on its diesel vehicles in violation of the federal Clean Air Act. Use of these devices increased NO_x emissions throughout the country, up to 40 times the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) limit, resulting in adverse impacts to air quality and felt particularly in Delaware, where the transportation sector is the state’s leading source of air pollution.

The \$3.4 million in funding available this year to Delaware covers the fourth and final phase of the federal settlement with the automaker – and the state’s last disbursement from a total \$9.6 million from the trust since 2019.

This year’s solicitation of RFPs aligns with previous project awards, going for upgrades to cleaner-fueled vehicles. These projects included:

- **Phase 1** is a multi-year partnership with the Delaware Department of Education (DDoE), which leveraged the EPA Diesel Emissions Reduction Program (DERA) grants and the Environmental Mitigation Trust, to replace a total of 115 state-owned diesel school buses with buses that operate on clean diesel or propane. DDoE plans to replace additional school buses in Year 4, and exhaust all Phase 1 funds in 2022.
- **Phase 2** supported grants to Waste Management of Delaware, which replaced 10 diesel solid waste refuse vehicles with trucks that operate on compressed natural gas (CNG), and to The Teen Warehouse in Wilmington, which [upgraded to an electric zero-emissions school bus](#) using the DERA grant and the Environmental Mitigation Trust.
- **Phase 3** plans included the replacement of nine diesel school buses with two private transportation providers and five government-owned Class 4-7 medium diesel trucks. Replacement projects for one school bus and the five government-owned medium trucks were delayed to due COVID-19 and will be completed in the fall of 2022.

DNREC also announced an [RFP in the fall for installation of direct current, or DC-fast electric vehicle charging stations](#).

Comments and questions may be made in advance of the Feb. 15 public meeting. They will be considered for DNREC response during the meeting. Contact and login information is available on the DNREC online calendar at de.gov/dnrecmeetings. Additionally, written questions will be received by the DNREC Division of Air Quality until Feb. 22.

The solicitation can be found on the state [Office of Management and Budget website](#). The final phase of Environmental Mitigation Trust funds are expected to be awarded during the second half of 2022. More information on the Environmental Mitigation Plan is available at de.gov/vwmitigation.

About DNREC

The Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control protects and manages the state's natural resources, protects public health, provides outdoor recreational opportunities and educates Delawareans about the environment. The [Division of Air Quality](#) monitors and regulates all emissions to the air. For more information, visit the [website](#) and connect with @DelawareDNREC on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or [LinkedIn](#).

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